



Camden Water Ditch Trail



Take a step back in time across the Toll Bridge. Today's footbridge rests on the same stone piers as Charles Camden's second bridge.

TRAIL HEAD DIRECTIONS

Starting at the Whiskeytown Visitor Center, drive west on Highway 299 to the Camden Historic District parking lot, approximately 8 miles. At the end of the parking lot follow the paved trail, over the Clear Creek footbridge and then turn left. Walk along the white fence and cross over the next bridge. Turn right at the trail head sign.

Apple orchard over 100 years ago.



FEATURES

- Easy, mostly shady hike, 1.75 mile loop
- Historic District: buildings, cemetery and orchard remnants
- This trail connects to the Mill Creek and Clear Creek Vista Trails

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The trail follows a wide, sandy path along Willow Creek. Across the creek, the historic Camden House (1852) is seen. Continue on to the gravesite of Levi Tower who was once the owner of the Tower House Hotel.

The path forks at the gravesite. The right fork ends a short distance away at the remnants of the Camden Water ditch diversion dam.

Take the left fork and follow the old Camden Water Ditch. Now a path, this irrigation ditch watered the gardens and orchards that once thrived there. Notice the old fruit trees as you walk along. Imagine the setting 150 years ago, the meadow with an orchard and gardens.

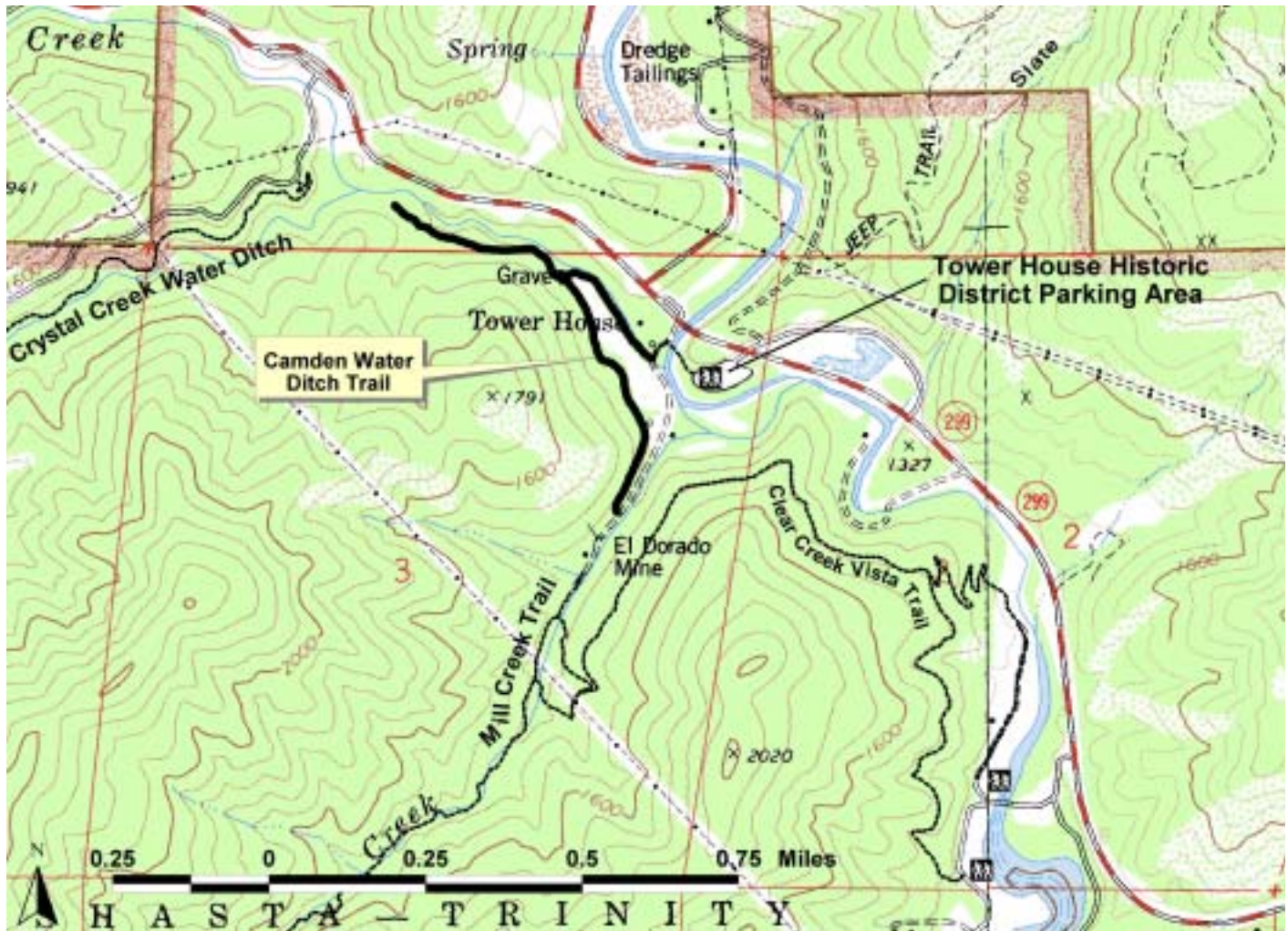
Continue along the path under a canopy of oak and pines. An old barn will come into view and next, the Tenant Farmhouse. This house was built in 1913 to accommodate a caretaker, as the Camden family was spending less and less time



On this portion of the trail just past Levi Towers grave, look for some of the old fruit trees.

on their land. Today this house has been restored and serves as quarters for a National Park Service Ranger who provides protection, much as the caretakers of the past did.

Around the bend, the rushing waters of Mill Creek can be heard. The trail ends at the Mill Creek Trail. Turn left and head back to the parking lot. Turn right and continue on for a short distance to visit the site of the El Dorado Mine. See the Mill Creek Trail Guide for more information.



Camden House in spring



Barn across from the Tenant Farm House

Camden Historic District

The story of the Camden Historic District begins during the California Gold Rush of the early 1850s. It is best told through the two lives of Charles Camden and Levi Tower who were friends, partners and then brothers by marriage. It is a story of perseverance and success for one, of dreams and loss for the other. Learn more and visit the informational panels in front of the Camden House.

Elevation Profile:

Very little elevation gain, trail is almost flat.



Early Residents

For centuries before the 49ers found their way to the banks of Clear Creek, the Wintu Indians enjoyed the good life here at the confluence of Willow, Crystal, Mill and Clear Creeks. The abundant wildlife, plant life and natural materials provided by their environment allowed them to prosper. Although the Gold Rush era nearly destroyed the Wintu, their heritage still lives today.